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Report on evaluation

Report of the High Commissioner

Summary

This report, covering the period from July 2017 through June 2018, is provided pursuant to the decision of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme to consider reports relating to programme and administrative oversight and evaluation during its annual plenary session (A/AC.96/1003, para. 25.1.(f)(vi)).

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I. Introduction

1. In 2017 and 2018, UNHCR made concerted efforts to equip a strong, independent and effective evaluation function.[1] These efforts reflect the High Commissioner's renewed focus on evaluation as a powerful tool to promote accountability to stakeholders, including Member States, donors and persons of concern, and to build a learning organization.[2] Last year, UNHCR presented a five-year Evaluation Strategy,[3] with the following objectives: i) increasing evaluation coverage and quality; ii) improving the timeliness, relevance and utilization of evaluation findings; iii) building capacity to undertake and use evaluations; and iv) strengthening an evaluation function that is linked to other complementary functions, such as oversight, strategic planning, monitoring, data and analytics, and results-based management (RBM).

2. The dedicated Evaluation Service is independent and its work is informed by Evaluation Strategy and the 2018 annual workplan.[4] This is the first year that UNHCR has placed an annual Evaluation Service workplan in the public domain. The workplan includes both centralized and decentralized evaluations, and focuses on critical strategic areas able to provide much-needed evidence to improve UNHCR's strategies and programmes, and increase effectiveness. The evaluation topics were selected and prioritized based on information and discussion sessions, including with UNHCR's leadership, a field survey, as well as individual meetings with staff from country offices, regional bureaux and divisions.

3. All UNHCR evaluations are designed in line with the key evaluation principles of independence, impartiality, credibility and utility.[5] Evaluations are undertaken by external individual consultants or firms and managed by the Evaluation Service in close collaboration with relevant regional bureaux, divisions and country offices. All evaluations and reviews are placed in the public domain and include management responses for each evaluation.

II. Evaluation Service programme of work

4. Between July 2017 and June 2018, the Evaluation Service completed eight evaluations and initiated an additional 15 evaluations, which included strategic priority areas, such as: i) emergency response; ii) protection and operational delivery, including the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and cash-based interventions; iii) critical programming areas with medium and long-term prospects for persons of concern to UNHCR, such as livelihoods, resettlement and the humanitarian-development nexus; iv) UNHCR's advocacy, partnerships and inter-agency cooperation; and v) key organizational effectiveness and performance areas. This represents a significant increase in the coverage of evaluations when compared to previous years. Table 1 below provides an overview of evaluations.

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[1] See www.unhcr.org/evaluation-and-research.html.

[2] This is outlined in the UNHCR (2016) Evaluation Policy. See www.unhcr.org/3d99a0f74.

[3] Available from www.unhcr.org/research/eval/5a93c8637/unhcrs-evaluation-strategy.html.

[4] Available from www.unhcr.org/research/eval/48ef4ba02/policy-development-evaluation-service-pdes-approved-work-programme.html.

[5] See the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation, www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914.

Table 1: Overview of completed, ongoing and planned evaluations

Evaluations	Countries concerned	Completion
Completed evaluations		
Centralized		
Relevance and effectiveness of the implementation of three of UNHCR's protection strategies (i.e. the Global Education Strategy, the Updated Strategy on Action against SGBV and the Framework for the Protection of Children)	Chad/India/Jordan/Kenya/ Lebanon/Malaysia/Niger/ Pakistan/Uganda/ Zambia	Jul-17
Relevance and effectiveness of the Ukraine country programme (2015-2016)	Ukraine	Sep-17
Effectiveness of UNHCR's leadership of the global protection cluster and field protection clusters (2014-2016)	Afghanistan/Democratic Republic of the Congo/Honduras/ Nigeria/Pakistan/ Philippines/South Sudan	Oct-17
Evaluation of scaling down of UNHCR's presence in Angola, Botswana and Namibia	Angola/Botswana/Namibia	Jun-18
Decentralized		
Effectiveness of the quality integration project in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Jul-17
Evaluation synthesis of cash-based interventions in Jordan	Jordan	Dec-17
Evaluation of refugee response of UNHCR and partners in the White Nile State, Sudan	Sudan	Jun-18
Impact of livelihoods programming in Benin	Benin	Jun-18
Impact of livelihoods programming in Chad	Chad	Jul-18
Current evaluations		
Centralized		
Effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the global fleet management programme	Chad/Colombia/Kenya/Lebanon	Sep-18
Progress report on the comprehensive refugee response framework	14 countries applying the comprehensive refugee response framework	Q2/Q3-18
Longitudinal evaluation of the humanitarian-development nexus	Ethiopia/Honduras/Jordan/Niger	Annual reports: 2019, 2020 Final report: 2021
Evaluation of the first year of the level-3 emergency response in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Q4-18

Evaluations	Countries concerned	Completion
Evaluative review of UNHCR's policies and procedures on the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse	To be determined	Nov-18
Impact and effectiveness of UNHCR's global livelihoods strategies and approaches	Costa Rica/Ghana/India/Rwanda/Turkey	Dec-18
Evaluation of the level-3 emergency response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Dec-18
Utility and relevance of current data and information management approaches	Pakistan/Sudan/Syrian Arab Republic/ Regional Office in the Americas	Mar-19
Decentralized		
Evaluation of our livelihoods programmes in Guinea	Guinea	Aug-18
Evaluation of effectiveness of the protective transfer agreements for refugees in Central America	Costa Rica/El Salvador/Guatemala/Honduras	Sep-18
Effectiveness of UNHCR's prevention and response programming on SGBV	Lebanon	Sep-18
Relevance and effectiveness of communication and advocacy efforts in Europe	Austria/Germany/Greece/Ireland/ Sweden/United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sep-18
Impact of cash-based interventions on protection/long-term outcomes and lessons learned from pivot/transition to livelihoods in Greece	Greece	Oct-18
Effectiveness of training programmes on cash-based interventions	Non applicable	Oct-18
Planned evaluations		
Centralized		
Effectiveness of approaches and strategies deployed by the Global Learning Centre to build staff capacity	To be determined	Q1 2019
Relevance and effectiveness of our engagement with the private sector	To be determined	Q1 2019
Decentralized		
Effectiveness of UNHCR's prevention and response programming on SGBV	Brazil	Dec-18
Effectiveness of the Kalobeyei Integrated Social and Economic Development Programme	Kenya	Q2 2019
Effectiveness of cash-based interventions	To be determined	Q1 2019

III. Emerging lessons from completed and ongoing evaluations

5. Findings and recommendations from UNHCR evaluations are discussed with staff and management at various points during the evaluative process. The process of conducting an evaluation therefore requires close collaboration and engagement with relevant offices and teams. Debriefings and workshops provide opportunities for immediate course corrections and shifts in programming. At the organizational level, these lessons are also incorporated into ongoing work related to implementation of the comprehensive refugee response framework (CRRF), follow-up to the "grand bargain" commitments and other significant efforts carried out to address forced displacement challenges. Below are a few emerging lessons from evaluations.

6. *Emergency response*: The decentralized evaluations that have been concluded – the Ukraine country operations and the response in the White Nile State in Sudan – and the ongoing centralized evaluations of the Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of Congo level-3 emergencies are yielding findings and recommendations. These are being used to improve how UNHCR provides protection, improves reception and admission, undertakes registration as well as delivers assistance.

- The evaluation of UNHCR's operations in Ukraine, where the Office declared a level-2 emergency in January 2015 and where it co-leads the protection and shelter clusters, was conducted in close collaboration with the Regional Bureau for Europe and completed in 2017. The evaluation generated useful lessons learned on UNHCR's performance in the context of an inter-agency humanitarian response to large-scale internal displacement and concluded that UNHCR's objectives and strategies for persons of concern were both relevant and appropriate. The evaluation also found that UNHCR's accountability to affected populations was improving but that further efforts were necessary. It recommended that UNHCR adopt a longer term vision for the pursuit of development goals benefitting internally displaced persons and strengthen cooperation with a range of development actors. This recommendation was accepted for follow-up action by UNHCR's management.

- The evaluation of the response in the White Nile State of Sudan was commissioned in March 2018 in order to generate lessons learned and identify examples of good practice. It also aimed to support improvements to the ongoing refugee response in the White Nile State, which may also be made in the wider refugee response in other parts of Sudan. Despite significant challenges, including limited humanitarian access and funding constraints, the evaluation found that UNHCR had improved its coordination of the response, particularly following the launch of the Refugee Coordination Forum in 2016. It also concluded that there was a need to engage more effectively with development actors. UNHCR had ensured the delivery of critical life-saving assistance – particularly in the water and nutrition sectors – but improvements of the emergency standards for sanitation, shelter and education were also required. The evaluation also found that UNHCR had kept protection at the centre of its operations, but recommended that UNHCR do more to promote protection mainstreaming through awareness-raising, capacity-building, integrated approaches, and community-level feedback and complaints systems. It further recommended working towards the development of more long-term and multi-year strategies.

- The Rohingya refugee influx into Bangladesh that began in August 2017 was declared a level-3 emergency, as was the situation of internal displacement of more than 1.4 million individuals in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Kasai region. In line with the 2016 Policy on Evaluation, evaluations are carried out in the first 12 to 18 months of all level-3 emergency responses, and UNHCR plans to complete the evaluations of the two aforementioned emergencies in 2018. These will focus on the effectiveness and impact of UNHCR's efforts in delivering assistance and protection and advocating protection and solutions; its coordination role; and the quality and appropriateness of its middle to long-term strategies and plans.

7. *Protection Delivery:* The two centralized evaluations completed in 2017 and 2018 that related to protection delivery, as well as the ongoing decentralized evaluations, are examining how protection activities can be improved in UNHCR's response to refugee and internal displacement situations.

- The centralized evaluation of the global strategies on education, the prevention of and response to SGBV and the protection of children found that the strategy on SGBV and the framework on child protection were mutually reinforcing and had a positive influence on country-level programming. The findings also indicated a qualitative shift in education programming towards increased refugee inclusion into national systems and continuous learning; however, the challenges of measuring outcomes make it difficult to draw clear conclusions. In its response to the evaluation, senior management accepted the recommendation on improving the measurability of future strategies to ensure a more effective operational application, including in light of the current and future UNHCR RBM system.

- UNHCR's Evaluation Service, together with the Regional Bureaux for the Americas and the Middle East and North Africa, as well as country offices, is conducting two country-level evaluations of activities on the prevention and response to SGBV in Brazil and Lebanon. These two evaluations are being carried out in recognition of the fact that effective programming on prevention and response to SGBV is a reliable indicator of the overall effectiveness of the response. They are designed to cover dedicated programming as well as mainstreaming and multi-sectoral interventions, which range from shelter and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to access to education and livelihood opportunities. The evaluations are expected to generate evidence on how to scale up and maintain adequate capacity in the area of SGBV prevention, mitigation and response, including in different operational contexts and in different phases of a response – from emergencies to transitions to well-established operations. They also aim to ensure SGBV programming is better supported and informed by quality data and analysis.

- In response to a recommendation issued by the Board of Auditors in 2013, the Evaluation Service collaborated with the country office in Jordan to undertake an evaluation on the impact of cash-based interventions. In particular, it set out to measure the effect that UNHCR's cash programming has on the lives of Syrian refugees in Jordan and to examine the relationship between cash transfers and specific areas of vulnerability. The report generated useful evidence on the impact of cash on debt, access to services and negative coping strategies. For example, findings showed that debt was lower in households receiving cash from UNHCR. Cash led to a slight

increase in health expenditure and a significant one in education expenditure, with two thirds of respondents indicating that it had improved their psychological well-being. Families receiving cash from UNHCR were also less likely to use negative coping strategies or reduce the number of daily meals. The evaluation findings are helping inform UNHCR's cash strategy in Jordan, as the focus on meeting basic needs shifts to establishing linkages between cash and social protection outcomes. The Evaluation Service will also conduct two additional decentralized evaluations on cash-based interventions at the country level in 2018/19. One of these has already begun in Greece. Final reports are expected by the end of this year and early next year.

8. Between July 2017 and June 2018, the Evaluation Service commissioned several evaluations that examined the effectiveness of UNHCR's engagement with development actors and on durable solutions, which are particularly important in relation to the CRRF and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

- In addition to providing support for the monitoring and evaluation of the application of the CRRF,[6] the Evaluation Service: i) commenced a three-year study on UNHCR's engagement with development partners, the private sector and other civil society partners to strengthen refugee response; ii) began an evaluation of country-level livelihood strategies and activities with a view to examine UNHCR's role as a convener/facilitator of the economic inclusion of persons of concern to the Office; and iii) is co-managing an evaluation of the Kalobeyei Integrated Social and Economic Development Programme in Kenya, which a partner has funded and commissioned. These evaluations will provide a rich and comprehensive evidence base for course corrections and strategic thinking on how to improve the economic and social inclusion of refugees and members of host communities.

- In collaboration with UNHCR's Regional Bureau for the Americas and the Regional Representation in Panama, the Evaluation Service is completing a decentralized evaluation of the protective transfer agreement in Central America to provide an evidence-based assessment of its results, strengths and weaknesses. It is also carrying out analysis on expenditure and identified areas for improvement. The evaluation is examining the protective transfer agreement programme as a tool to mitigate protection risks and find solutions for a small number of people with specific needs and who are at immediate risk in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

9. In close collaboration with relevant colleagues, the Evaluation Service is undertaking four evaluations covering three thematic areas: UNHCR's engagement with partners; coordination; and advocacy efforts.

- A completed evaluation focused on UNHCR's role as protection cluster lead in emergency responses to internal displacement. It found that UNHCR's leadership of country-level protection clusters has helped strengthen global leadership and advocacy in favour of protection, and provided support for field coordination and protection programming. However, the evaluation also found that while there had been efforts to enhance the effectiveness and predictability of leadership at the field level,

[6] The progress report will be released later this year.

significant work remained to be done in order to strengthen the performance of the global protection cluster. This is reflected in the commitments made in the formal management response to broaden the understanding of UNHCR's role as cluster lead with country offices, provide guidance for protection clusters on engaging with national governments and local actors respectively, and continue to review and invest in the relationship between the global protection cluster and specific areas of responsibility.

- In addition, there are two ongoing evaluations: one on the effectiveness and relevance of advocacy efforts in Europe, with the support of the Regional Bureau for Europe; and the other on UNHCR's approaches to developing and sustaining partnerships with the private sector for non-financial benefits. Both are expected to be completed in early 2019. An evaluation of coordination structures in refugee operations is also planned for late 2018. These three evaluations will yield evidence on how UNHCR can work more effectively with a wide range partners and the larger United Nations system to achieve common objectives.

10. In selected areas, UNHCR's effectiveness and efficiency as an organization will be evaluated in the course of 2018. These include: a) a completed evaluation of the phasing down of three offices in the Southern Africa subregion from 2014 through 2018 (completed in 2018); b) an evaluation of the global fleet management effort to manage light vehicles in the organization (completed in Q3 of 2018); c) an ongoing evaluation of the data and information management approaches used at UNHCR, especially at field level (to be completed in early 2019); and d) a planned evaluation of the approaches used by UNHCR's Global Learning Centre to build staff capacity (to be commissioned in Q4 2018). These four specific evaluations are producing robust evidence on how UNHCR can be more efficient and cost effective in managing resources and internal capacities. The evaluation in the Southern Africa subregion found how early planning for phasing down UNHCR's presence, including by working with governments and other partners, are important elements of its engagement, which warrants greater efforts and operational guidance and capacity development.

11. In keeping with the High Commissioner's strong commitment and organizational measures to prevent all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, the Senior Coordinator on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment, the Emergency Task Force chaired by the Deputy High Commissioner and the Evaluation Service are undertaking an evaluative review of UNHCR's policies and approaches on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse to ensure that policies and measures are guided by the highest United Nations standards. This report will be finalized by the end of this year.

IV. Progress on the Evaluation Strategy (2018-2021)

A. Increasing the coverage and quality of evaluation

12. As noted earlier, 2018 marked the first year in which the Evaluation Service made its annual programme of work public. The programme is ambitious, aiming to commission 20 evaluations in 2018, a four-fold increase from 2017. This significant increase is in keeping with recommendations issued by the Board of Auditors in 2013, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the Joint Inspection Unit, which noted that the quality and coverage of evaluations in UNHCR need to be enhanced in line with United Nations standards.

13. UNHCR's expanded evaluation coverage requires a greater commitment and further efforts from senior leadership and country teams, in addition to the work of the Evaluation Service and the resources needed. The support of senior managers and Representatives in operations around the world has been notable in this regard. Their participation in the annual survey and related discussions on the programme of work has been active, while access to information, data and stakeholders for interviews has also been provided. This has demonstrated to UNHCR staff the value of being open and accepting of scrutiny and critical analysis.

14. Moreover, greater coverage has been achieved through both decentralized and centralized evaluations. While evaluation capacity is being built across the organization, the Evaluation Service has made itself available to all requests for support for decentralized evaluations, including financial, technical and quality assurance. In the coming years, the Service intends to expand coverage more significantly through decentralized evaluations. With this in mind, the Evaluation Service is working with the Global Learning Centre, the Division of Programme Support and Management and the Change Management Team to plan for evaluation expertise in the field as well as at Headquarters. The Evaluation Service at Headquarters will therefore remain lean in the foreseeable future.

B. Improving the utilization of evaluations

15. Utilization-focused evaluations are one of the primary underpinnings of the Evaluation Strategy (2018-2021). They are critical to UNHCR's shift towards more evidence-based decision-making and a greater degree of confidence in processes of reflection and course correction based on lessons learned. The Evaluation Service works closely with relevant bureaux, divisions and field offices to ensure that evaluation findings and recommendations have an impact on decision-making and course correction.

16. Since last year, the Evaluation Service has introduced two methodological approaches, primarily to generate greater utilization of evaluations. These include the introduction of longitudinal evaluations which are designed to accompany a programme or intervention as it is being carried out. Such evaluations gather evidence as a programme unfolds and allow external evaluators to offer course corrections, insights and recommendations on an interim basis. The longitudinal evaluations of the humanitarian-development nexus and the Bangladesh level-3 evaluation are two very different examples of this approach.

17. Another methodology introduced related to evaluations that help inform strategy development; these formative evaluations include contextual analysis, establishing benchmarks set against the standards of other similar agencies, and literature reviews. The evidence generated, along with analysis of UNHCR's programming, is then expected to be used to develop recommendations for UNHCR's strategic directions.

18. Management responses have been completed in a timely manner for all evaluations finalized during the reporting period and placed in the public domain as soon as they are ready.[7] As per the Evaluation Policy, one member of the Senior Executive Team who is assigned by the High Commissioner is accountable for the management response of all centralized evaluations, while Directors or Representatives are accountable for the management responses for all decentralized evaluations.

19. Finally, the Evaluation Service held multi-stakeholder meetings or workshops in country offices and at Headquarters during evaluation processes to promote learning,

[7] See www.unhcr.org/evaluation-and-research.html.

discuss findings and prioritize recommendations. These workshops offered external evaluators an additional opportunity to validate findings and develop recommendations together where possible.

C. Building UNHCR's evaluation capacity

20. The Evaluation Strategy focused on four actions to improve capacity: i) conduct an annual consultative process with management to select evaluation topics; ii) introduce rapid evaluations which are narrower in scope and involve UNHCR staff as peers to build capacity; iii) develop field proficiency when undertaking decentralized evaluations; and iv) hire independent evaluation consultants as roving, surge capacity on an interim basis to support the field in carrying out decentralized evaluations. In addition, the Evaluation Service has reached out to UNHCR's Global Learning Centre to develop evaluation-focused learning material. This will be introduced in existing and stand-alone learning programmes.

21. During the reporting period, progress was achieved against the four objectives. The annual consultative process supported discussions among 150 senior managers and staff with various functions and at different grade levels, both in the field and at Headquarters. They examined the purpose and usefulness of evaluation not only to improve programme delivery but to develop strategy, learning and improved accountability to attain results. Peer involvement of staff took place in two evaluations during the reporting period, and increased efforts were made to engage UNHCR staff in all evaluations to increase both capacity and utility. Consultants were hired and supported the Evaluation Service during several decentralized evaluations and helped disseminate information about evaluation processes and methodologies to UNHCR staff.

22. The service is now collaborating with the Global Learning Centre to develop a learning strategy to strengthen the evaluation capacity of UNHCR staff across functions and grades. The focus of this learning strategy differs based on the job family; for some, building awareness of what evaluation entails and how evaluations are used for decision-making, advocacy and accountability will be prioritized. For others, the focus will be on developing knowledge and skills on how to plan and manage different types of evaluations, internally or jointly with other agencies. Relevant existing learning programmes have been identified, and the Evaluation Service is reviewing these materials to update training content.

D. Linkages with internal and external efforts related to evaluation

23. Although the Evaluation Service is a stand-alone, independent Service, it coordinates with several other oversight functions such as audit, strategic oversight and the Inspector General's Office in order to be relevant and effective. It also works with data and analytics, RBM, and strategic planning and programme design functions (such as the multi-year, multi-partner efforts) since these functions generate evidence and use such evidence in their own efforts.

24. The Evaluation Service and the UNHCR Internal Audit Service of the OIOS collaborate on annual workplans to explore synergies and ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication or burden placed on operations during missions. Further, the two functions, while drawing on very different disciplines and methodologies, examine similar issues related to organizational effectiveness, strategy and efficiency, along with other oversight functions such as risk management and the Inspector General's Office. In order

to leverage these oversight functions, the different entities meet informally to exchange lessons learned and work on common themes.

25. The Evaluation Service offers advisory support to both the data team and the RBM revision project team to ensure that evaluation is an integral part of the overall efforts to link evidence with planning, course correction and strategic thinking. This is undertaken at the operational level as well as the organizational level. The Service also offers support on indicators and data collection approaches, particularly on impact and outcome data, which are often required in evaluations.

E. Management of the Evaluation Service

26. One of the critical first step in establishing the newly configured Evaluation Service was to ensure that a fully functional team had relevant skill sets and profiles. In order to equip the Office with the required high-quality technical expertise, in 2017/18, one external expert was identified and recruited, and two internal staff with experience with analysis, data management and research were appointed to join the Service. The team now comprises five professional staff, three of whom are external experts and two are internal staff. This helps ensure that a range of technical expertise and familiarity with UNHCR's mandate and programmes is available. The externally recruited Head of Service took up her position in June 2017, and support staff complete the team.

27. In order to conduct evaluations in a more efficient and cost-effective way, the Service also worked closely with the Procurement Service to prepare long-term agreements with 15 firms specializing in evaluation following a competitive tendering process. These firms have been pre-approved to provide quality evaluation services to UNHCR for an initial period of five years.

V. External relations and inter-agency evaluations

28. The Evaluation Service has continued to participate in several inter-agency and external evaluation bodies. It is an active member of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group and participated in the evaluation practice exchange and annual general meeting of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in May 2018. The Service is also the co-convener, together with the World Food Programme, of the UNEG Humanitarian Evaluation Interest Group. In this capacity, it co-led a mapping exercise with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization to examine evaluations on the humanitarian-development nexus in the past 8 to 10 years and offer reflections on the extent to which they generated evidence on how to deliver on collective outcomes and overcome the humanitarian-development divide.[8] In addition, the Evaluation Service served as UNHCR's focal point in the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), participating in its annual meeting and liaising with the network on relevant issues.

29. During the reporting period, the Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS conducted the 2018 triennial review of UNHCR's 2015 evaluation of programming on durable solutions. The Evaluation Service helped coordinate this review, acting as the focal point for internal and external stakeholders and making relevant arrangements. OIOS formally presented the triennial review at the June 2018 session of the Committee for

[8] The UNEG-Humanitarian Evaluation Interest Group mapping of evaluations on the humanitarian-development nexus are available from www.uneval.org/document/detail/2120.

Programme and Coordination in New York, which expressed support for UNHCR's leadership and the work that it has undertaken. OIOS had, until 2017, conducted programme evaluations of UNHCR on a yearly basis. As of 2018, OIOS has informed UNHCR of its decision to conduct UNHCR programme evaluations once every two years in recognition of the stronger planned evaluation capacity within UNHCR.

30. The Evaluation Service provides technical guidance and quality oversight on evaluations led by donors or partners working with UNHCR's divisions. The evaluations of the youth education programme and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation project, as well as the impact evaluation of grants on forced displacement from the United Kingdom's Department of International Development and the World Bank are examples of such support. In addition, the Evaluation Service helped strengthen the design and analysis of the joint programme operating model review of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS that was recently completed in June 2018.

31. The Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) has launched the new 2017-2018 assessment cycle, and UNHCR will be assessed during this cycle. In this regard, the Evaluation Service is providing full support and input as needed.

VI. Supplementary activities related to knowledge management and research

32. The Evaluation Service is committed to supporting independent research on a wide-range of themes relevant to decision-makers, UNHCR staff and partners, – as well as to refugees themselves – on issues concerning persons of concern to UNHCR and forced displacement. The Evaluation Service will continue to cooperate and support independent research and research publications such as the Forced Migration Review. In addition, the Evaluation Service continues to engage with academic institutions, individuals and networks, as well as think tanks and other thought leaders, with a view to complementing UNHCR's own publications, such as the New Issues in Refugee Research. These initiatives feed into the global efforts set out in the New York Declaration and the proposed global compact on refugees.

33. During the period from July 2017 through June 2018, UNHCR supported the issuance of three issues of the Forced Migration Review on: the situation of forced displacement in Latin America and the Caribbean; Syrians in displacement; and economies and work for displaced people, mainly refugees. A memorandum of understanding signed between UNHCR and the Forced Migration Review in March 2018 helped formalize existing practices in support of the research publication in a number of areas. As part of UNHCR's New Issues in Refugee Research series, a report entitled "Working towards inclusion – Refugees within the national systems of Ethiopia" was published, as was the Evaluation Service's review of UNHCR's approaches to engagement with communities hosting large numbers of refugees. This review examined the extent to which UNHCR's current policies, strategies and programmes are appropriate and applicable in these settings, and found that actual practice varied according to the context.

34. Finally, the Evaluation Service has engaged with external stakeholders to enhance research conducted by the Oxford Refugee Studies Centre on refugee economies and perceptions monitoring surveys collected in support of the "grand bargain".

35. In conclusion, the Evaluation Service's expanded scope of work reflects the strong leadership commitment towards increased accountability and enhanced learning.